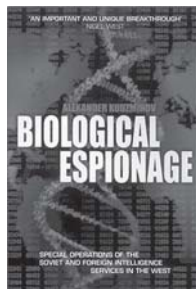

Book Reviews

By Mr. Reid Kirby



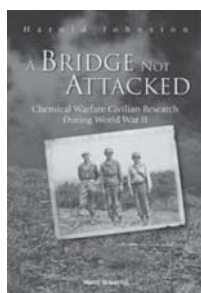
Biological Espionage: Special Operations of the Soviet and Russian Foreign Intelligence Services in the West, Alexander Kouzminov, Stackpole Books, 2005.

Biological Espionage is about the Soviet methods of Human Intelligence (HUMINT). The author contends that intelligence gathered by technological means, such as remote sensing, fails to provide the information needed for dealing with biological warfare. Without HUMINT, it is impossible to obtain and analyze test samples of the biological warfare agents and, therefore, impossible to determine intentions.

The forward, written by Nigel West, illuminates the opinion that the largest failing of Western intelligence is the lack of HUMINT, which was evidenced by the intelligence gathered regarding Iraq. Unlike books written by defectors, Mr. Kouzminov is a Russian émigré; and because of his patriotic character, the KGB is not vilified as a Byzantine bureaucracy of evil. He attacks incompetence, mismanagement, post-Soviet corruption, and the abuse of power by the KGB/SVR. Spy novel enthusiasts will enjoy the descriptions of HUMINT operations, the preparation needed for fielding illegal immigrants as spies, and how sleeper spy agents were tasked with the mission to attack the United States and NATO facilities with biological weapons in the event of a war. However, the author disappoints the reader by making several unsupported, one-line statements about biological warfare.

Soviet intelligence reported that the United States did not have a serious offensive or defensive biological weapons program; however, Mr. Kouzminov states that the United States maintained a secret offensive program until 1989. The author is clear about Russia maintaining a biological weapons program that consists of genetically engineered agents which incorporate biological regulators for added effect.

The author ends the book with a list of potential targets located worldwide and the recommendation that world intelligence agencies develop and collaborate on HUMINT in order to achieve biological security.



A Bridge Not Attacked: Chemical Warfare Civilian Research During World War II, Dr. Harold Johnston, World Scientific Publishing, 2003.

Unfortunately, this book escaped my attention when it was first published, but it is available in paperback now and well worth reading. Dr. Johnston writes of his personal involvement in World War II chemical warfare research with the National Defense Research Committee (NDRC) at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and Berkeley. Official histories are available, but *A Bridge Not Attacked* offers more of an oral history and adds depth to the people involved.

The title, *A Bridge Not Attacked*, is after the poetic reasoning of Dr. Johnston's mentor, Professor Roscoe G. Dickinson, who introduced the research mission to his graduate students at Caltech by saying, "We are guarding a bridge that may never be attacked; we hope it will not be. If it is not attacked, our work has succeeded."

The first part of the book is an autobiography of the author, and subsequent chapters have biographical sketches of the other researchers presented. Caltech researchers investigated sulfur decafluoride (Agent Z or S-10), cyanides, and monitoring equipment used in field trials. There is also a considerable presentation of micrometeorology investigations made by the group. Although not the focus of the book, the Chemical Warfare Service appears in several recollections of ironic situations. The search for a chemical proving ground and the experiences of researchers in the field trials at Mount Shasta, Dugway Proving Ground, Bushnell, and San Jose Island make up the later half of the book. One of the interesting facts that the author offers is the percentage of fatalities attributed to war research within the NDRC, which was comparable to the percentage of fatalities suffered by the military at large (1.7 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively).

Mr. Kirby is a project manager for TALX Corporation. He holds a bachelor's degree in valuation science from Lindenwood College, with a minor in biology and special studies in behavioral toxicology and biotechnology.